

Hepatitis C Virus

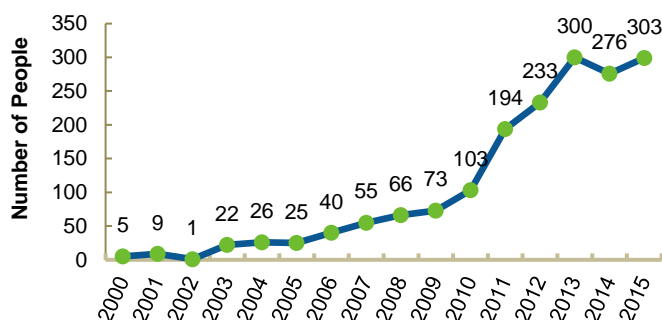
ON THE RISE: YOUNG ADULTS



WHAT IS HEPATITIS C?

Hepatitis C is a liver disease caused by the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV). HCV is the most common blood-borne illness in the United States, and new cases are on the rise. Hepatitis C can cause serious health problems including liver damage, cirrhosis, liver cancer, and even death.¹

HCV IN YOUNG ADULTS AGES 30 AND YOUNGER IS ON THE RISE IN IOWA



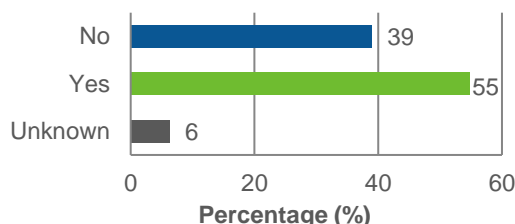
WHY ARE YOUNG ADULTS GETTING HEPATITIS C?

Injection drug use is a primary driver for increases in new, young hepatitis C cases. Particularly, the recent increase in abuse of prescription and non-prescription opioids is fueling an outbreak of hepatitis C among people 30 and under.

HEPATITIS C AND INJECTION DRUG USE

HCV can spread easily through surfaces, equipment, or objects contaminated with infected blood. People who inject drugs can acquire and spread hepatitis C through contaminated needles, syringes, water, cotton, and other equipment.² Of the youth and young adults ages 30 and under reported diagnosed in 2015, data on injection drug use was collected for 69% (208). Among those, 55% of people reported injection drug use.

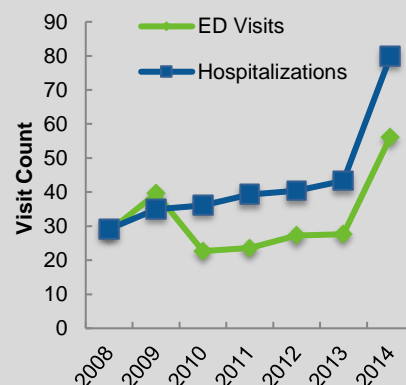
Injection drug use among adults living with HCV who are 30 years of age or younger



HEROIN AND OPIOIDS

In Iowa, rates of heroin and opioid-related overdoses have increased greatly over the last 10 years. Emergency department (ED) visits related to opioid overdoses have increased by roughly 253%, and ED visits from heroin have increased 2,500% from 2003 through 2014 for people less than 35 years of age.

Opioid-Related Emergency Dept. Visits and Hospitalizations



Youth and young adults who report ever having injected drugs should be tested for Hepatitis C.

For more information on hepatitis C virus and to view the recently released Hepatitis C Iowa Profile please visit:
<http://idph.iowa.gov/hivstdhep/hep/hep-c>

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